
From the Office of Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz

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BYSIEWICZ WANTS "ATM-TYPE" VOTING TESTED THIS YEAR

Endorses Senator Dodd's federal election reform efforts

Citing Connecticut's aging fleet of mechanical lever voting machines, Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz proposed testing computerized touch screen voting technology during this year's state elections.

Bysiewicz also announced support for U.S. Senator Christopher Dodd's election reform efforts in Washington, calling the bipartisan Dodd-McConnell bill the most important election reform measure since the Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965.

"Lever voting machines have proven reliable for almost a century in Connecticut, but unfortunately are no longer manufactured," Bysiewicz said. "Exploring new voting technologies is critical for our state and I would like to see us test computerized touch screen voting during the 2002 state elections."

Bysiewicz also said Connecticut could benefit directly from Dodd's federal legislation in two ways through: 1) eligibility for funding for new voting technology; 2) federal funding for completion of the Secretary of the State's centralized voter registration system.

"Senator Dodd's proposal represents the first significant financial commitment to election reform from the federal government," she said. "As a state facing a budget deficit, it is important for Connecticut to also seize this opportunity from a fiscal standpoint."

At the urging of Bysiewicz, Dodd included provisions encouraging states to establish centralized voter registration systems, which numerous national election studies have identified as the cornerstone of voting reforms.

"A centralized voter registration system is the best way to protect voters' rights and prevent fraud, and Connecticut is further along than most states," Bysiewicz said. "The lesson we learned from the historic 2000 election and the Florida recount is that every vote is precious and every voter must be treated equally. New voting technology and Senator Dodd's bill will move us ahead as a state and a nation by strengthening the election process, which is the foundation of our democracy."

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